

HELEN AND OTHER POEMS

(1872)

BY BERNARD DREW

LIBRARY  
UNIVERSITY OF  
CALIFORNIA  
SAN DIEGO

Robt. R. R.



# Helen and other Poems

## *ERRATA*

Page 9, Line 11; for "in" read "is"

Page 83, Line 20; for "lay" read "laid"

---

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2007 with funding from  
Microsoft Corporation

# Helen and other Poems

By  
Bernard Drew

London  
A. C. Fifield, 13 Clifford's Inn, E.C.  
1912

**WILLIAM BRENDON AND SON, LTD., PRINTERS, PLYMOUTH**



TO  
PERCY INSTAN PAINTER



# Contents

	PAGE
Helen . . . . .	9
Requiescat . . . . .	14
On a Summer Evening . . . . .	16
Hymn to Demeter . . . . .	17
Success . . . . .	22
Little Stukeley . . . . .	23
The Gardener . . . . .	24
Song . . . . .	26
Ode to Autumn . . . . .	27
Ode to Winter . . . . .	30
Vitæ Corona . . . . .	33
The Cause . . . . .	34
To Poppies . . . . .	34
The Muses . . . . .	36
The Iconoclast . . . . .	36
Come Away . . . . .	44
Onward . . . . .	45
Endymion and Selene . . . . .	46
The Stoic . . . . .	48
A Farewell . . . . .	50
Omar Khayyám . . . . .	51
Lazarus . . . . .	56
Edward the Peace-Maker . . . . .	60
The Line of Least Resistance . . . . .	63
The Reply . . . . .	64

	PAGE
The Future . . . . .	66
Evening Pictures . . . . .	67
No More . . . . .	68
The Fallen Rose . . . . .	69
To R. S. Hawker . . . . .	70
To Francis Thompson . . . . .	71
Horace. Odes I. 9 . . . . .	71
The Enchanted Castle . . . . .	73
A Prayer . . . . .	76
My Garden . . . . .	77
Nocturne . . . . .	79
To Amaryllis . . . . .	80
The Better Part . . . . .	81
Penelope Forsaken . . . . .	82
Le Guignon . . . . .	86
"Non sum qualis eram" . . . . .	87
O Mihi Præteritos . . . . .	89
Catholicity . . . . .	90
The Three Silences . . . . .	91
Carpe Diem . . . . .	96
The Dream and the Deed . . . . .	97
The Days that Follow After . . . . .	98
Immortality . . . . .	99
Te Deum Laudamus . . . . .	100

## Helen

*Before the Coming of the Greeks to Troy*

I KNOW not why, yet these fair nights and days  
Filled full to overflowing with the breath  
Of roses, and the faint far-wafted scent  
Of distant valleys, that lay burdens on  
The wings of passing winds—spices and flowers—  
Still leave me with desires unfulfilled.  
I say I know not why—I should delight  
In lovely scenes and dreams well-nigh wrought  
out

In splendour of all life—but yet there comes  
Upon my soul a loneliness perchance  
At deepest noon when sleep in on the sea,  
And hushed are all the birds, and on the fields  
Peace reigns amid the poppies and the corn.  
Yea, these long summer hours are sweet indeed  
And all these lordly palaces are mine  
To roam from echoing chamber marble-paved,  
Through corridors of porphyry, richly decked  
With statuary and all that glads the eye  
And ministers to mind and intellect;  
But when all else is deep in rest, there creeps  
Soft as tho' syllabled by lips unseen

A murmur on my ear—one whisper—"Greece."  
Yet if a man should say "Thou seemest sad :  
What ails thee that thy heart is ill at ease?"

I could but answer that my happiness  
Is full, and grief dwells not in thought with me.  
If I should think on love, that lack I not :

Truly did Menelaus worship me  
As tho' I were some Paphian deity,  
But doth not white-browed Paris in these  
things

Excel my former lord? He girds at dawn  
Because he says my face is yet more fair :  
He laughs to scorn the heat of noon, the which  
He says his passion doth out-countenance,  
As the bright sun in his degree the moon.  
The stars he swears are dim and lustreless  
To the majestic splendour of my eyes ;  
And when the evening flames along the sky  
And every cloud is full of lurid light,  
Still he declares these lovelinesses naught  
Set side by side with my most perfect beauty.  
And with all these a thousand words he frames  
In praise of what I am, till half deceived,  
I almost grasp belief where Modesty  
Should purse her playful lips, and archly smile,  
And murmur "Flatterer, why so idly jest?"

Who shall sing all that Love can make us do  
Or think in diverse ways and to all ends?  
For thus it is that Menelaus once

# Helen

I I

Was all to me, and now is Paris all :  
Yet neither *all*, perchance, for both I love,  
Yet for such causes sundered from each other  
As far as heaven and earth, and sky and sea.  
Paris, the low-voiced Paris, delicate,  
Much like unto a woman, soft-arrayed  
In silken robes, and jewelled and perfumed,  
As tho' he were a princess coming forth  
Fresh from a tiring-maiden's careful hands.  
Him must I love for that his soul and mine  
Are one in these sweet womanly concerns,  
For I deal not in opposite desires  
Wholly, nor yet in all things in the same.  
Thus Menelaus, he the strong of arm  
Sinewed as Herakles, delighting not  
In aught save war and battle, and the strife  
Of swords fierce ringing on the morion's crest,  
He also was and is a part of all  
My very being and my life. In love  
He shares my thoughts, and whatso'er I do,  
I yet bear his remembrance in my heart,  
A mirror wherefrom never fades away  
A form that once found sweet reflection there.

And Troy is fair : these ancient shrines upreared  
Breathe tidings of far-distant days of yore,  
When gods and men strove here for mastery :—  
And now as golden twilight frets the spires  
And distant pinnacles of palaces,  
And temples glow in crimson hues of dusk,

And all the glory of the evening bathes  
The shining domes and pillar'd porticoes,  
I whisper to my soul "What aileth thee?"  
And then I turn me westward where the sun  
Sinks slowly in the sea o'er Tenedos,  
And the lights dance, and ocean is aflame,  
And then I long to pierce the burning arch,  
To cast my sight far o'er the horizon's face  
And see the isles that stretch immense beyond.  
Hark! now there comes to me as oft before  
Soft-wafted on the breath of evening wind,  
A murmur, and it swells upon the air:  
"Greece, Greece" it seems to say "calls unto  
thee  
From far-off shores and valleys, and green hills,  
Whither O daughter have thy footsteps strayed?"  
But with this gentle whisper comes a voice,  
An undertone that speaks but half a word,  
And then withdraws within itself and dies  
As tho' it were not ready to be born.  
But its sound is as battle, or the sea  
When all its waves are lifted up to strife,  
And charge with white-capped hosts against the  
rocks.  
It rides upon the fury of the blast,  
And in the rush and onset of swift steeds:  
It sounds where War's fierce trumps are shrilling  
high,  
And tattered ensigns wave in every gale.  
What shall all this forebode? What if this voice



Scarce heard as yet should gather strength with  
time?

Who shall abide its message if this be?

Who shall not tremble, listing what it saith?

## Requiescat

## I

**H**E hath peace : a long repose  
Gathers silent o'er his head.  
Mourn ye not ! O let him rest  
Deep in sleep : he is not dead,  
But as petals of the rose  
Gently fall till Spring's behest  
Bids the new blooms all arise,  
Autumn softly shrouds his eyes.

## II

Shall the lustre of his name  
Dim, though for a space he dwell  
Where the brazen trump of fame  
Shrills not, where nor dirge nor knell  
Swells upon the voiceless air ?  
Though, at midmost hour of noon,  
Glittering star and orbèd moon  
Cast aside their evening care,  
Who shall doubt that throned on high  
Each keeps state and majesty ?

## III

Weep ye not ! O have no fear,  
He abides though kingdoms perish :  
He shall suffer not though year  
Heaped on year leave nought to cherish.  
Weave no cypress leaves of sorrow :  
His is an eternal crown ;  
Never shall there dawn a morrow  
On his spotless name to frown.  
What he kept he now doth render,  
Weep ye not, O cease to weep !  
Wrapped awhile in evening splendour  
Deep he slumbers ; let him sleep.

# 16    On a Summer Evening

## On a Summer Evening

### I

O THAT the west would remain  
Blazing in crimson and gold,  
That the mountainous clouds, that are rolled  
In a glory of light each on each,  
Could abide thus for aye and would deign  
To mortals their secrets to teach.

### II

Night glimmers dark on the air,  
The breezes have fled from her wings;  
In the sky the deep purple still clings  
Loth to depart. A dim star  
Twinkles ere day is aware  
That dusk has stolen in from afar.

### III

The twilight is o'er: the damp night  
Rushes headlong from heaven. Far and wide  
Points of fire now stealthily glide  
Where the sun on his glorious throne  
Ruled regal in splendour of light,  
Peerless, majestic, alone!

## Hymn to Demeter

### I

MOTHER, my mother of the golden sheaves,  
 And sunset-cinctured brow, when round thee  
 cling

The scarlet tributes that each wind doth bring  
 Of wandering leaves :—

When to thee rise the songs of harvesting  
 From reapers reaping ere the sun be spent;  
 While through the mellowing twilight sweetly ring  
 The hymns of gleaning-maidens, haply blent

(As of some mystic music wafted far  
 From crystal courts of some scarce visioned star)  
 With distant strains from where thy temple gate  
 Of no man's foot inviolate

Whose heart is full of thankfulness to thee,  
 Stands open wide that joy and praise be sung :—  
 Let me thy truest worshippers among  
 Utter thy laud, alas ! how tunelessly !

### II

When unencumbered with Time's dusky freight  
 That now upon thy realm hath shadow thrown,  
 Unto thy service wholly dedicate

## 18 Hymn to Demeter

Earth gladly gave thee tribute of thy own,  
Laded thy altars with the golden grain,  
And (with a theft made holy, so that he—  
Kind-visaged Dionysos—joyfully  
Allowed the hallowed rape)  
Gathered the purple clusters of the grape,  
Clothed in the sun's fierce glance with many a  
stain,  
And added them an offering to thy shrine :  
And I who come with this poor gift of mine,  
This song that I had poured into thy ear  
If in an earlier and a lovelier year  
I had been nascent ; yet in some strange trance  
From which I prayed for no deliverance,  
Dreamed thou wert worshipped still :—  
Heard as in some far backward vale of sleep  
Or poppy-haunted cavern of the deep  
The sweet low chant that hymned thy ancient bliss,  
While in the sheltered folding of each hill  
And over every jocund vale the grain,  
Made golden with the sun-god's burning kiss,  
And sweetly visited with silver rain,  
Spread by thy guidance and at thy behest.  
And tho' the flaming gateways of the west,  
Bastioned with crimson of Time's sunken sun,  
Have clanged for ever on thy worship done,  
And left no trace of all thy altar fires :—  
Tho' thy sweet laud no other voice inspires,  
Tho' to Eleusis no glad pilgrims come,  
And in thy praises every tongue is dumb,

# Hymn to Demeter

19

Let me at least thy wonder yet declare,  
Yea, Mother, hear me while I make my prayer.

## III

Is there no tender Attic vale asleep  
In noontide peace where never knell has rung  
That bade the old gods cease from out their shrines?  
Is there no pleasaunce, purple with the vines,  
Which through the mist of ages yet doth keep  
Some memory of songs that men have sung  
When splashed with vintage from the foaming press?  
Or when the fields decked in thy loveliest dress  
Resounded to the merry harvest lute,  
And no man gathered aught of all thy fruit  
Save with an offering to thy altar brought?  
If there be any such, let it be sought  
By my unwearied feet. O let my way,  
Ere anguish of the night engulf my years,  
Be thither turned, and ere the close of day  
May it be mine to stand where reapers reap  
The golden ears, and scarlet flowers of sleep  
That fill my eyes with all unbidden tears,  
For that perduring grief that smote thy heart  
In ancient days, and yet recurrently  
Wounds thee with iteration of the smart;  
When to the dusky realms Persephone  
Returns, the spoils of Autumn round her feet,  
Her reign of roses done, what time the wheat  
Grows red beneath thy footsteps, and the sound

Of cymbals clashing in thy honour make  
A solemn music for her beauty's sake,  
A parting strain to follow where the ground,  
So seeming solid to the fiery core,  
Yet somewhere, as in Enna, opens deep  
Towards the flowerless fields of silent sleep,  
As when the car of Dis her lilies bore  
Downwards, to bloom upon a slumberous shore.

## IV

Thus, Mother, as of Life I hymn thee now  
Chief nurturer, so in the Halls of Death  
Thee I salute with no uncertain breath,  
Thee I acknowledge (tho' around thy brow  
Clings not the wreath of sleepy poppy blooms)  
A mediator potent with thy child,  
Queen in the tenebrous abode of glooms  
Unceasing, and I make this last request,  
Perchance with faltering voice, yet unbeguiled  
With treason 'gainst thy primal influence,  
That when my going hence  
Draws near, my tenure of the sun's regard  
Fades in the purple glory of the west,  
Thou would'st thyself Persephone beseech  
To make my call melodious silvern speech,  
So that the way toward her realms unstarred  
Be nowise fraught with terror to my sight:  
But rather with the sound of evening bells  
At sundown stealing, may I seek the night,



# Hymn to Demeter

21

While in my ears the vesper canticles  
(Such as within thy fanes the Attic maids  
Set echoing) make music, so that I  
Untrepidant and all unfearfully  
May make my journey to the land of shades.  
And there forgetful of the light,  
There where the silence of unnumbered years  
No bitterness of unavailing tears  
Breaks ever ; there where Lethe waters flow  
Between soft banks where balms of healing might  
Their odour through the night  
Send forth ; there where for ever soft and low  
Voices of dreamers cadenced songs and slow  
Attune ; there let my place for ever be  
In sacred manumission, from all care  
Beyond the boundary of thought set free.  
Thus, Mother, have I made to thee my prayer,  
Thou from whose bounteous hand the fields give  
birth  
To golden harvests : think on me, I pray,  
When shadows fall apace athwart my day  
And I return unsorrowing to the earth !

## Success

O SIT not idly all thy Summer long,  
Go forth to labour, if thou wilt be strong !  
Weakness, inert, turns shuddering from the light,  
Hides from the sun, and trembles at the night.  
She strives not, yet has neither rest nor peace,  
For her, unbounded terrors never cease.  
Hand crossed on hand, she patiently abides  
Some help to come at turning of the tides ;  
Yet since she strikes not forth for her own aid,  
Hopeless she sits and horribly afraid.  
For her, vain phantoms fill the sunlit noon,  
Gaunt spectres wail at rising of the moon.  
Earth, air, and sea one mighty league combine  
To weave for her portentous sign on sign.  
O fool ! awake from out thine empty sleep,  
Vain are thy dreams and slumbers—vain as deep !  
Attempting nothing, so is nothing done,  
Only by strife the victor's wreath is won ;  
O heed whilst yet thou canst retrace thy road,  
If thou wilt have, learn to endure thy load.  
Success is not the minister of fate,  
Who waits for Fortune must for ever wait.

## Little Stukeley

*(Written in the garden at Little Stukeley Rectory,  
Huntingdon)*

STILL stands the ancient church: the solid tower  
Of twofold structure rears its massive head,  
From whence peals forth the never-ceasing hour  
O'er the green dwelling of the silent dead.  
Here peace abides: Time hath nor strength nor  
power

To change the firm repose of mead and field,  
No laurel to his victor's crown they yield,  
They pay no tribute and afford no dower.  
Upon the gentle breeze comes wafted low  
The tinkling of a sheep-bell. Far and near  
The sweet-voiced cuckoo's oft-repeated cry  
Blends with a hundred lucid notes and clear.  
Roses deep-hued and pale profusely blow  
And match the pageant of an evening sky.

*(June 20th, 1905.)*

## The Gardener

## I

**I**N the gloom of the evening he goes  
Slowly where winds the dim lane  
Arched overhead with the trees :  
His work with the daylight is done.  
He labours with love for the rose,  
He welcomes the soft-shining rain :  
Well he knows the sweet voice of the breeze  
And the glorious face of the sun.

## II

His song is the song of the scythe  
When it swings with the swath in its rear,  
Pouring incense to heaven as sweet  
As ever from censer arose.  
The voices of birds from the blithe  
Sweet mavis that rings in the ear,  
To the note that the woodlands repeat  
In the dusk of the evening, he knows.

## III

He communes with Earth, and his care  
Guards from evil the sculptured white leaves  
Of the lilies with gold-crested heads,  
And queenly far-wafted perfume.

He greets the first snowdrops that dare  
Peep forth from the shroud Winter weaves  
And he laughs when the Spring softly sheds  
An ocean of blossom and bloom.

## IV

And the seasons are fair maidens all  
To whom he brings tribute and due ;  
And dower he reaps for reward  
In the verdant new leaf 'gainst the bole  
Of ebon soft-washed by the fall  
Of April's sweet showers : the hue  
Of the fresh-gleaming velvet-like sward  
That ages have seen as they roll.

## V

And with these he counts the gay maids  
Of Summer, for whom he has striven :  
He loves them as children of light,  
And grieves at their fall when the sun  
Grows weak : and as sad Autumn fades,  
And the sunset-hued foliage is riven  
From each bough, full dim grows his sight,  
And he sighs to the woods " It is done ! "

## Song

LOVE, the summer days are flying  
And the golden hours are dying,  
Wilt thou not relent?  
The rose's reign is done and over,  
Gone the white and purple clover  
Where the snowdrops went.

Youth cannot remain for ever,  
Age, tho' tardy, faileth never  
With his solemn pace.  
While there yet is time, O maiden,  
Ease my heart full sorely laden,  
Turn on me thy face!

Wilt thou ever thus be cruel,  
Hiding as a priceless jewel,  
Or a timid dove?  
Thine my heart is and thine only,  
Leave me not bereft and lonely,  
O be thou my love!

## Ode to Autumn

## I

**R**ED is the leaf on hedge and bough  
And myriad creepers scarlet burn :  
The woods sleep wrapped in mist,  
The faint low-murmuring breezes softly sough  
Thro' many a branch too rudely kissed  
By whirling tempest winds.  
A moving spirit seems to brood, and yearn  
To speak of things but half revealed, yet finds  
No voice. Leaf falls on leaf  
Softly o'er Earth's dark breast.  
O hearken ! thro' the woodland sweeps  
A low-moaned song of grief :  
It murmurs in the elm's gigantic crest,  
Sighs to the bending ash, and sadly weeps  
O'er the gnarled trunk and mighty thews  
Of some primeval father of the glade  
That flings a deep-browed branching shade,  
Now lovely with its crown of Autumn hues,  
Thy gifts, fair maiden of the misty morn,  
And of the things that swiftly pass away.  
Why dost thou task thyself to thus adorn  
Thyself for bridal on thy funeral day ?  
Why dost thou don such brightness of array  
When soon thou shalt lie cold, and all forlorn,  
O short-lived maiden of the misty morn ?

## II

Ask yonder robin why he chants his lay  
Full blithely as tho' Summer reigned supreme.  
He nothing reckes of any future day,  
The burden of his song is as a dream  
Full of unfathomed majesty, and splendour  
Of cloud-built cities of the ethereal sky,  
And floating strains of distant melody  
Whose sounds, entrancing him, he fain would  
render.

Is it not thus with thee, O autumn maiden,  
Dost thou not follow visions of thine own,  
When with thy ripened treasures fully laden  
Thou sendest forth the mandate from thy throne,  
And Beauty speaks her brief and awful spell  
Whose solemn answering echoes sigh "Farewell!"?

## III

Farewell then, O my Autumn! yet alas  
If I do wish thee speed upon thy way,  
I quicken thy soft feet upon the grass  
And haste thy too brief stay.  
So I will bid thee only fond adieu  
Till once again thou comest in array,  
Thy sunset glories thro' the livelong day  
To paint anew.  
Go then, since thou must part, O haste thee now  
While the wind wails on every ruined bough.  
O tarry not, O tarry not,



Brief tho' thy glory, it suffices me  
To anguish all my soul for thy sad lot,  
That what thou art thou soon must cease to be!

## IV

From out the west there comes a moan of bells  
Ringing for evensong 'neath some far spire :  
Hark thro' the silent twilight air it swells,  
And sears my heart like fire !  
For it seems as the tolling of a knell,  
Rung o'er thy gorgeous bier, O gentle maid,  
That I have loved so briefly, yet so well,  
But doomed to fade !

## V

The voice of that dim belfry in the west  
Is silent, and the orisons arise,  
And on my soul there sinks a solemn rest,  
As darkness o'er the skies.  
All vain regrets, all lamentations cease,  
A faint sweet song of sleep is in my heart :  
Now lettest thou thy worshipper depart,  
In peace :  
For with mine eyes I have beheld and seen  
Thy face, O lovely Autumn, O my queen !

## Ode to Winter

## I

CANST thou hear any song outpoured to thee,  
Lord of the shrilling blasts and icy winds  
Whose breath is as a manacle that binds  
The fleet limbs of the floods that seek the sea?  
If thou art yet undeafened, and the roar  
Of all thy tempests, when the stormy main  
Thunders aloud on every rocky shore,  
Still leaves thee with an open ear to gain  
Knowledge of fainter strains of melody,  
Hear then, O Winter, while I sing to thee.

## II

Spring fled, and Summer blooms soon passed and  
faded,  
And Autumn's regal pageant girt on wings :  
Each held due state till conquering hours invaded  
Their fair domains, as ancient warring kings.  
And thou, gaunt monarch of the snowy crown,  
Hast come again to thine inheritance ;  
Low at thy throne thy compeers bow them down,  
Nor seek to test the temper of thy lance.  
Long is thy reign, and stern are thy decrees,  
And thou dost hold a searching inquisition  
Among the branches of the leafless trees  
That sob in sad contrition !

## III

Deep in December glooms thy place is found,  
Holding close fellowship with black-winged night :  
But, tho' a tyrant, thou art truly crowned  
With diadem sweet unto all men's sight :  
The Christmas holly and green mistletoe  
Wreathe thy brow gaily, and the silver snow  
Clings round thy raiment, and the bells of Yule  
Are loud thro' all the land,  
Awakened by thy hand,  
When thou art most unquestioned in thy rule :  
And tho' the roar of thy imperious wind  
Is loud, it seems to sink and slowly cease  
Before the cry of "Peace to all mankind,"  
Before the voice of Christ proclaiming peace.

## IV

O regent of the month of Janus' head,  
What thoughts are thine, when from each tower  
and spire  
Peals forth the last lone bell at mid of night,  
That swells upon the keen wind ever higher,  
A solemn knell of a departed year ?  
Wilt thou not shed a tear ?  
Wilt thou see vanish from thy sight  
A friend, long tried and honoured,  
With no sad lamentation, no meet dirge  
For one that thou hast known in chrisom bed,  
In youth, and hoary age's utmost verge ?

Toll solemn bells upon the wintry air,  
Pay the last tribute while 't is just ;  
Remembrance crumbles into dust,  
And recks of neither joy nor care.  
Toll, O ye solemn midnight tongues of woe,  
Men, like the summer flowers, come and go,  
Blossom like meadow poppies, then sink low !  
And as ye welcome the fast-coming year,  
O sadly toll, O sadly toll  
A requiem for the old year's soul,  
A dirge o'er his lone bier !

## v

Art thou more tender to Time's latest child  
Than to the aged limbs now laid to rest ?  
Not yet of thy stern look art thou beguiled,  
He, too, must hark awhile to thy behest.  
But know thou, Winter, he shall break his chain  
A space, ere yet again thou hold him fast :  
He shall rejoice with Maytime's lovely train,  
He shall enjoy the shade the woodlands cast ;  
He shall deride thee in his fervent heat,  
Shall whisper in the rose's ear of love.  
Reign ! for the moments of thy kingship fleet,  
And soon shall Earth find food for Springtide's  
dove.

## Vitæ Corona

## I

**C**OURAGE! faint not, O sorely wearied one,  
Deafened amid the tumult and the din :  
Think, still there is, ere Life's last set of sun,  
A crown to win.

Let thine eyes rest upon it from afar,  
Tho' mists enshroud it from thy eager sight :  
Trust yet, and it shall guide thee as a star  
Thro' deepest night.

## II

And when the dawn is fully come, behold  
It shall fall o'er thy brows as diadem,  
Graven of pure and thrice-refinèd gold,  
And decked with many a gem.

So at the last ere slumber seals thine eyes,  
And night steals on with silent-footed pace,  
Thou mayest say "Behold, I will arise,  
And seek my Father's face."

## The Cause

**I**F I do fight and not prevail,  
I will not curse the gods and fate,  
Lest in the joints of my own mail  
Unremedied, Defeat holds state.

And if I win not at the last  
The victor's envied laurel wreath,  
I will not say that heaven has passed  
An edict 'gainst the earth beneath.

But I will question with my soul  
For reasons, who shall answering say :  
" Before thee once there lay the goal,  
But thy feet trod another way."

## To Poppies

**H**APPY maidens of dreams,  
Sweet guardians of slumber  
That by Lethe's soft streams  
Stand countless in number,  
There is balm in your breath,  
In your hair there is soothing,

If ye whisper of Death  
It is void of all loathing.  
Ye tell of the fields  
That mellow and whiten  
With the treasure Earth yields  
When the swift sunbeams brighten.  
From your lips comes a sighing  
When the breezes pass o'er you,  
With the golden ears flying  
Above and before you,  
Lamenting forlorn  
Your fall ere the sickle  
Is thrust in the corn,  
And the skies are grown fickle.  
Farewell, O sweet daughters  
Of slumber and sleeping,  
Be my tears poured as waters  
Resistlessly sweeping,  
When your heads are sunk low  
No more to awaken,  
And the angry winds blow  
And the fields are forsaken !

## The Muses

FRESH as dew of early morn,  
Bright as sunbeams newly born,  
Clear as is the crystal stream,  
Airy as the lightest dream,  
Swift to flee as rays of light  
When the evening sinks in night,  
Courting chase yet hard to hold,  
Pure as thrice-refinèd gold,  
Sweet as honeyed flower-petal,  
Strong as forgèd shields of metal,  
High and proud yet meek and lowly,  
Wrapt in cloud-like vision holy,  
All these virtues spell to me  
Thy fair train, Calliope !

## The Iconoclast

DIM in the languor of twilight the last faint rays  
of the sun  
Vanish : the hills are in darkness : the day is over  
and done.  
Night with a solemn stillness spreads o'er the star-  
spangled sky



Whispering softly the dirge that the flowers hear  
as they die.

They die and are soon forgotten, Death lovingly  
breathes o'er their head ;

I long for the sound of his voice, I long to be laid  
with the dead.

For my life is fierce within me : I am bound with  
a chain to the earth,

And I curse with a bitter curse the day that gave  
me my birth.

Should I desire to live? I have nothing to gain or  
to lose,

Oblivion and darkness alone would I ask, had I  
power to choose.

Love has died from my heart, I can hate no more  
nor can scorn,

But a thousand times I ask the question, " Why was  
I born ? "

The faith of my childhood is gone ; it abode for a  
while like a star,

And sometimes I think I can see its feeble rays  
from afar.

Sometimes—ay, even now—if I dream on my  
mother's face,

Surges come swelling upon me of thoughts that I  
scarce dare trace ;

Memories, voiceless and dim, silently steal o'er my  
soul :

They remind me—alas !—of the day when I held  
a belief as a whole.

## 38                    The Iconoclast

I have cried in the darkness of night, "My mother,  
that taught me to pray  
At thy knee at the coming of dusk, at the dim  
departure of day,  
O that thou now wert at hand as of old, and that I  
were a child,  
When the face of the sun seemed to me as the face  
of a god that smiled."  
I have looked the last on her face ; I shall taste no  
more of her love :  
When she died she spoke hopeful things; she spoke  
of a meeting above.  
Of a time when the world shall have ceased, when  
its winding course shall be run,  
When the moon and the stars shall be darkened,  
and the light faded out from the sun.  
Then, I thought the words true, but I know now  
they cannot be ;  
She has passed to the voiceless night, to the gloom  
whither all must flee.  
And the world must last for ever, and men come  
to miserable birth,  
Being nothing but corporal structures, reared to  
inhabit the earth.  
As our brother the ape has ascended, who knows  
but that we may ascend,  
But in truth it were better indeed that we might  
turn back and descend ;  
Dig to the old, old levels, and herd again with the  
beasts,

As they say that a king once did, in the tale that is  
told by the priests.

For we learn but to know we shall perish : our  
knowledge falls backs on our head,

That our life being finished and ended there is  
nothing to fear or to dread ;

That beyond the procession of years and the days  
that for us shall be dusk,

Hope kindles no beacon for guide : our souls shall  
die as our husk.

Our soul? O Man, thou hast none, and here is  
the torture of Death,

That he silences every desire, when his hand chills  
the fount of thy breath.

Thou art dust and to dust shalt return, and mingle  
thy bones with the mould,

What art thou better than beasts? than thy ancient  
fathers of old?

Wherein is thy mighty advance, wherein art thou  
now so great?

The veil 'twixt the seen and unseen thou hast rent  
and hast gazed upon Fate.

From thy eyes no mystery is hid : no sanctity now  
doth remain :

Thou hast broken the shrines of thy gods : thy  
gods thou hast bound with a chain,

Whose links are the thoughts of thy mind, tempered  
and welded to one

At thy reason's flaming forge : thou hast grievously  
done and undone.

For a faith that is brother of hope is mightier than  
Science's word,  
But this thou hast utterly lost : now thou weepst  
for what thou hast heard.  
Thou thoughtest the music was sweet, as the  
Siren's voice was of old,  
Thou hast found thine idol but clay that thou  
worshippedst long as of gold.  
New gods hast thou made for thyself, born nor  
of sea nor of flame,  
Their features are as thy features : their names as  
of thine own name.  
No longer doth God fashion man in similitude unto  
His face,  
Man shapes the Deity now in the likeness of his  
frail race !

. . . . .

The night is falling upon me : I am going forth to  
the dark,  
On the ocean where nothing is, I must launch in  
my fragile barque.  
Long have I sought for Death, and now that I  
know he is near,  
My heart is shaken within me, tho' I thought I  
could never fear.  
There are voices that whisper of doubting, if this  
life be the end of all,  
If beyond the darkness of death there shall loom up  
a judgment-hall :

If the deeds of the flesh are accounted and weighed  
to their uttermost weight,

If our lives be without a plan, or ruled by a hand  
of Fate.

These are the thoughts of the hours when the  
wheels of the night are slow,

And a terror lays hold of my heart, and I fight  
with a nameless woe.

Death seems to rise from the tombs, pale, and  
with gibbering lips

As the phantom of mariners' tales that hovered  
o'er sinking ships,

And he speaks with a hollow laugh as tho' he but  
waited his prey :

"Thou art mine, thou art mine, at last."—But he  
flies at the dawn of day.

He knows that his bow is well strung, and that  
none hath broken his sword,

That he is the shadow of life, and its bane, and its  
last dread lord ;

And that none may escape his spear, and none may  
abide his breath ;

Who shall barter with *thee*, O fiend ? Who shall  
strive against *thee*, O death ?

Have I not sought for truth ? Yea, but what have  
I found ?

Have I ploughed with my yoke on the sands, have  
I scattered on barren ground ?

I have reaped and have stored my harvest, I have  
threshed and garnered the wheat,

But at grinding the grist is bitter, and the dregs  
of my wine are deceit.

I have looked where I could not see, and because  
my visions were vain,

I have said, "There can be no land beyond Life's  
fluctuant main."

But now that my vessel is drifting, and I know not  
the name of her port,

I tremble lest breakers o'erwhelm her, I fear to  
think of her caught

In the jaws of the sea that is Death, and lifted to  
Life that shall be,

When light must shine upon things which the dark  
has shuddered to see.

But if there be a Hereafter beyond the dark gates  
of the grave,

If indeed the Son of Man had power to cure and  
to save,

If Christ in lowly guise suffered death for the sins  
of the earth,

And humbled Himself for a season, that men  
should come to new birth.

I must trust to His merciful pleading, tho' far I  
have wandered astray

As that poor hundredth sheep that had lost the  
path and the track of the way :

I must hope that the shepherd's care will purge  
me from sorrow and sin,

And that when I knock at the gate, His smile will  
welcome me in.

The darkness has shrouded my day and the noon  
that should have been glad  
With the hope of undying love has been dim as  
the grave and as sad ;  
And my sun has been clouded, my moon and my  
stars have sickened and fled,  
And perchance the vials of wrath are ready to pour  
on my head.  
But alas ! I am blind and a mist is upon me and  
creeps o'er my sight,  
O'er the eye of the mind that shudders at the gate  
of the unknown night,  
And if the veil be lifted, and behind that veil there  
be God,  
Needs must I bow my head, and willingly suffer  
His rod !

## Come Away

SOON the summer will be gone,  
Soon the rose's glory faded,  
Faint the light that brightly shone  
E'en in bowers the willow shaded :  
Come ere night lays hold on day,  
Come, my sweet one, come away.

Let us dance with blithesome feet,  
Let us pipe a cheerful measure,  
Haste while yet the light is sweet,  
While to live is very pleasure ;  
Make O make no longer stay,  
Come, my sweet one, come away.

Age has whispered in thine ear  
That 'twere good to make long trial ?  
Take my hand and have no fear,  
Look, the shade creeps o'er the dial ;  
Hark, the bird on yonder spray  
Calls thee " Sweet one, come away."

We have dreamed full many dreams  
Wandering o'er the hills together,  
While the summer's brightest beams  
Lit the white and purple heather ;



Deeds shall take their place to-day,  
Come, my sweet one, come away.

Let no weary hours more  
Wound our hearts with needless parting,  
Purest balm is here in store  
That can salve the fiercest smarting :—  
Love that ne'er will be said nay.  
Come, my sweet one, come away.

## Onward

O WHAT tho' every gate is closed and barred,  
May I not enter thro' some hidden door?  
What tho' my feet have found the ascent too hard,  
May I not try to mount the steep once more?

What tho' I fail? I yet have fought for right,  
And tho' the victor's crown be not for me,  
I have known all the rapture of the fight  
And fall with breast toward the enemy.

But in the distance yet I see a gleam  
Of hope, as tho' of some unrisen sun :  
O tell me not that it was in a dream  
I heard a welcoming voice that said "Well done."

## Endymion and Selene

ALL through the day Endymion slept : the heat  
Troubled not him as it is burdensome  
To sunburnt toilers in the summer fields.  
Asleep within a dell of leaves and moss  
O'ershadowed by the brows of Helicon,  
He dreamed of a far distant time of bliss  
When morning brought no rising of the Sun,  
Flooding the orient with rosy light,  
But evermore the silvery shining orb  
Full round or with her argent sickle spread  
As though in harvesting the clustered stars,  
Ruled silently athwart the vault of heaven.  
Long while he slumbered, but as evening shades  
Began to lengthen, and the western clouds  
Burned with the crimson splendour of decay,  
He turned him softly in his sleep and sighed,  
As tho' in sadness indefinable,  
Yet sweetened by the thought of coming night.  
And soon he wakened, at the twilight hour  
When half the world is glad with plenitude  
Of golden light and half is overwhelmed  
With silent shadows, mystical and grey.  
And lightly stepped he from the cavern's shade  
In eager expectation of delight,  
And with no faltering feet beneath the stars

## Endymion and Selene 47

Sped onward through the drowsing pasture lands  
And meadows where the scarlet poppies burned  
In fiery pomp beneath the golden sheaves ;  
Pausing no moment but with head erect  
As though in quest beyond the bourne of sight,  
Or edict of irrevocable day.

Then suddenly two clouds in midmost heaven  
Like magic veils before the Godhead's seat  
Moved backward each from each, and there enthroned

Girt round with tarrying cohorts of bright stars  
Selene blazed in silver majesty,  
And all the dreaming fields awoke in dread  
To hear the awful cry that rent the air.  
As with uplifted hands and burning breast  
Endymion prayed : " Come down to me, my bride,  
Forsake the lofty silence of thy realm,  
And find thy peace and mine upon the earth.  
All day my eyes are heavy with the sleep  
That comes upon me when the short night ends  
In sudden thunder of Aurora's steeds.

I live but in the hours when thou art near ;  
Come down to me, my bride, and make thy home  
Somewhere upon the shining face of earth,  
Where thou and I may dwell for evermore."  
He ceased, and from her argent throne the queen  
Moved, and a moment all the earth was dark ;  
And wonder seized the stars, but utter bliss  
Filled young Endymion's heart : one fierce embrace,

One anguished kiss was his whereof the touch  
Gave peace unto his troubled soul, what time  
Selene mounted to the darkened sky,  
And trancèd silence fell upon the fields.

### The Stoic

**I** HAVE kept silence many days,  
And communed secretly apart :  
And as a wanderer thro' a maze  
I have searched out and known my heart,  
And with this knowledge on my head,  
My soul unto my soul hath said :

“ Tread every step where'er thy road,  
Faint not nor languish in the sun :  
Tho' sore and weighty be thy load,  
Bear it until the day is done  
With no complaint, no anguished brow,  
Lest Fate be held more strong than thou.

“ Thee have they buffeted with blows,  
Thee have they beaten with their rods,  
And o'er thy head for ever flows  
The puny anger of their gods :  
Yet for all this thy head erect  
Looks o'er the world that they have wrecked.

“ And so for ever let it be  
(For all hard things thy heart can bear),  
But let them never draw from thee  
One supplication or a prayer :  
Lest with proud vaunting they should say  
Theirs was the glory of the day.

“ Firm to the end, no pardon sought,  
Stedfast to cleave unto the right :  
So when the battle thou hast fought  
And o’er thee gathers the great night,  
Thou with the sun may’st seek the west  
Knowing that thou hast won thy rest.”

## A Farewell

SHE never gave her lips to me,  
Nor knew I held her dear :  
And now—would God that she could see  
Each bitter tear !

I never thought of her as dead,  
So bright and fair was she :  
And now 't is all, all left unsaid  
Eternally !

And as she lay, Death's lovely bride,  
I whispered in her ear,  
Lest from beyond the darkling tide  
She yet might hear.

Then kissed her once for first and last,  
My greeting and adieu,  
And I, as on my way I passed,  
Prayed that she knew.

## Omar Khayyám

IT was the month of June, the month of roses,  
The reign of blossom and of fragrance sweet,  
When day in Night's dark chamber scarce reposes,  
But sits untiring in his regal seat,  
And when each lovely petal softly closes  
Sings lullabies that evening winds repeat.

And one fair day I wandered 'mid the flowers  
Of an old garden set 'neath sheltering trees :  
Tall hollyhocks reared up their slender towers  
Made vocal with the murmuring of bees :  
Sweet jasmine peeped through rustic-latticed bowers  
Stirred softly by the gentle summer breeze.

But above all that decked that garden's face  
The rose held sway unquestioned and supreme,  
And ruled, fulfilled with ecstasy and grace  
Tender and passionate as in a dream,  
Whereof the thought remains the only trace  
Of some clear vision seen but as a gleam.

And 'neath an archway there I found a seat  
On which the sun shed slender rays of light :  
'Twas fashioned of dark oak as seemed most meet  
Whereon was carved "Here Time doth stay hys  
flight,"

In deep broad letters none could e'er delete :  
I tarried here and marvelled at the sight.

Yet soon I seemed to understand, for all  
The glory of the summer seemed to stay,  
Nor pass from this sweet bower that held it thrall :  
I well-nigh thought 'twould never pass away,  
For the long noon heard not the night's faint call,  
And all unending seemed the sun's bright sway.

And here I sate me down and soon espied  
A little book that lay at my right hand :  
I took it up and oped the pages wide,  
And ere a leaf my hasty eyes had scanned,  
I knew the voice of one more soul that cried  
In deathless tones to every age and land.

I found a song of all sweet things that grow  
'Neath orient skies with wonder and delight ;  
I found a silver stream whose gentle flow  
Sparkles for ever in the sunbeams bright ;  
I found a garden where the roses blow  
For ever and reck nought of day or night.

And through the song there ran a subtle tune  
That whispered of far shores and distant scenes,  
Full of the passion of the rose in June :  
And all its mystic depth of fragrance means  
Seemed here portrayed as in a magic rune  
Sung long ago to old time kings and queens.



And much I found of vintage and the press,  
Of purple grapes from many a clustering vine  
Made glorious in fair summer's regal dress,  
And many cups I found of foaming wine . . .  
And thou, sweet singer, when thou didst confess,  
Was it for thy transgression or for mine?

For truly thy delight hath entered in  
And built a lordly mansion in my soul,  
Whereof tho' each wall were some deadly sin  
And death's dark ensign waved upon the whole,  
None should from my firm grasp that fortress win,  
Or lure me to seek out some other goal.

“ Believe this one thing whatsoe'er betide,  
Beauty is truth throughout the world's domain :  
Fear not to walk wherever she may guide  
Or hearken when her trumpet wakes the strain :  
Unharm'd she treads each path tho' strait or wide,  
And if thou followest thou need'st fear no stain.”

So spake I to my soul, for none was there  
Who should gainsay or disapprove my choice,  
As I poured forth upon the listening air  
The mystic secrets of that ancient voice,  
From out the chamber of a heart laid bare :  
The very flowers and trees seemed to rejoice.

Tavern or palace I cared not a whit  
So I but heard the poet's song therein,

That in some quiet corner I might sit  
Where Tumult's voice grew silent and its din  
Sounded far distant as the thought of it :  
If here I fell I do not fear the sin.

I quaffed, sweet singer, from thy ruby flow  
As of some river of delightful dreams.  
I gathered harvest where thy hand did sow  
In perfumed gardens lit by radiant beams,  
Where every sound was musical and low  
As of the rhythmic splashing of triremes.

I found thy flagon of a seemly shape,  
And fashioned out of clay in wondrous wise :  
It stood within the tent the breezes drape,  
Arched over with the everlasting skies,  
And if upon its lips I found the grape,  
Within there grew the flower that never dies.

For that sweet blossom never yet has blown,  
Nor for it ever wind sighed requiem :  
With the world's first foundations it was sown  
And planted ere the rays of any gem ;  
Before they shone it held its state alone,  
And it shall look upon the last of them.

Its name is Beauty and I found it there  
In rich profusion and magnificence :  
Each flower was perfect and the petals bare  
The sign of things that never pass from hence :

The mystic seal of all most rich and rare  
In purity and virgin innocence.

It is unchanging and in silence keeps  
The secret of its glory still unguessed :  
We know 'tis Autumn when the woodland weeps,  
We know the blossoms wake at Spring's behest ;  
We know the morning sunbeam softly peeps,  
And evening dies in splendour in the west.

But why or whence, we know not, nor didst thou  
Who only held for sure the rose, once dead,  
Should hear no more the evening breezes sough  
O'er her neglected and forgotten bed.  
With thee to one great Will we can but bow,  
Trusting as little children to be led.

Where'er our paths behind the veil may tend,  
Into what unknown lands we may be drawn,  
We yet have hope that somewhere ere the end  
Our eyes shall see the radiance of the dawn.  
And o'er thy grave perchance a Form shall bend  
To raise thy glass, turned down upon the lawn !

## Lazarus

**D**EAD! dead! A traveller through these dusky realms!

No warning voice, no sign or word vouchsafed,  
Only a sudden touch of some chill hand,  
And then a parting, and I knew no more  
Of earth, but wafted upon many wings  
I seemed to float above all things that are,  
And to taste knowledge deeper than the sea,  
And to gaze fearless on the infinite.  
But with all these new marvels I was sad,  
For of the past my soul remembered nought,  
And on the things to come there shone no light :  
No light! Ah God, the dark! the empty dark!  
And beyond all that came upon me then  
I was sore troubled by an echo, faint  
As drowsing poppies shaken by the wind,  
That, coming from beyond the world of shades,  
Seemed as a voice that called me back to life.  
And when that ceased I heard another sound  
As though of many waters murmuring,  
Or voices helpless in a gulf of tears ;  
And straightway I was happy, for there burst  
Upon me all the memory of the past,  
The dear dead past, the years that I had known  
Gloriously shining as the sons of morn.

I saw once more the great red ball of fire  
Magnificently fading into night  
Beyond the purple brows of Olivet.  
The long low ripples of Gennesaret  
And moonlit waters of fair Galilee  
Broke passionately on my eager eyes.  
The fields, the trees, the voices of the night,  
The murmur on the hills, the sea, the plain :  
The far-flung melody of distant streams,  
The choristers of heaven's expanse of blue  
Unsullied by the shadow of a cloud :  
All these rose up to tempt the sight, the ear,  
All these joined pleadings for the grace of life,  
All these more eloquent than the voice of man,  
More subtle than his keenest reasoning,  
Wrought in my soul one great desire—to live.  
And betwixt me and all these ghostly shades  
There came the faces of my sisters, clear  
As crystal depths of sleeping summer pools.  
Martha with love and helpfulness deep writ  
O'er her fair brows, and in her very self  
Fruitful not only in the thoughts of good,  
But in their due fulfilment and effect.  
She holds her soul in silence, as the moon  
Reigns o'er the night with speechless power and  
spell,  
But it is passionate as the summer rose  
In all its depth of fragrant purple bloom,  
And utter beauty and magnificence.  
Mary like to a slender lily, pure

And spotless as a driven plain of snow,  
Deep-souled, ethereal, soft of tone and speech,  
Tender of heart to everything that breathes.  
And lastly dawned on me (tho' from the first  
Awakening to the past, it seemed most near)  
The sweet, sad face of Him whom we have loved,  
And held as verily the Son of God  
Made Man, that He should triumph over death,  
And that He should not leave our souls in hell.

O Christ! behold me now among the dead,  
I cry aloud to Thee from out the grave :  
Among the voiceless I alone find speech ;  
Have mercy, Lord, have mercy on my soul !

My God ! that faint far echo that I heard,  
That never ceases, was it not Thy voice ?  
O Christ, my God, was it not even Thine ?  
Again I hear it ! louder yet again,  
As tho' it were a rending of all tombs,  
And every sepulchre since the world began !  
What words are those ? They break upon my ear  
In fierce encounter with my reeling soul.  
Dead ! dead ! I cannot hear them ! I am dead !  
This place of shadows girds me round about,  
I cannot stir, the dark is all around,  
And yet the words ! O God, the words, the words !  
They burn my soul, they are even as the flames  
Of deepest hell : they rage, they roar again,  
They echo loud as trumpets at the doom

Waking the last dread echoes on the earth,  
Bidding the dead arise : they call to me !  
My God, I hear them now, I hear them now ;  
They come more clearly, Lord, it is Thy voice,  
O Christ, they are Thine accents : thro' the gloom  
I seem to see Thy face, and loving arms  
Outstretched in longing toward me ! Hark again,  
The clamour dies : there is a sound of tears,  
The long low wail of women that do weep,  
A sobbing as of wind among the trees ;  
Then silence, and amid the hush there comes  
That voice once more ; it calls me, speaks my name :  
“ Lazarus, come forth ! ” The shadows flee and  
faint,  
The souls of all the dead whirl round my path,  
I mount, I rise, I pass the bounds of space,  
The lightning lends me wings, the thunders roar,  
Stars cry aloud and crystal seas respond  
With angel voices chanting sweet refrains :  
Light dawns before me and the Light of Life  
Breathes on me and I live, O Christ, I live !

## 60 Edward the Peace-Maker

### Edward the Peace-Maker

“Hæ tibi erunt artes, pacisque imponere morem.” . . .  
ÆN. VI. 852.

**I**NTO the sunset fares he forth alone,  
With all his long work o'er: the shadows creep  
Silent and mystic from the land of sleep,  
And one more king is parted from his throne!  
But unto him for whom the throbbing drum  
And slow wail of the pipes makes loud lament  
Was given a more assured embodiment  
Of proud regality than e'er shall come  
From crown or sceptre. In his people's heart  
He dwelt a king of love, bound by sure ties  
Of strong endeavour toward the better part  
Of peace, for which his voice who silent lies  
Amid the mourning nations ever rose:  
Ever toward one sacerdotal end,  
One binding kin to kin, and friend to friend,  
One ordered scheme of harmonied repose.

Not his to loose the iron tongues of war,  
Not his to bid embattled hosts engage,  
But 'neath the ægis of his tutelage  
He bade the loud-voiced cannon cease to roar:  
He spoke, and Strife's red banner straight was  
furl'd;



## Edward the Peace-Maker 61

By utterance of his august decree  
Peace sounded with her trump from sea to sea  
The federated union of the world !

What tribute shall we bring to him to-day,  
Since at mortality's divine behest  
He takes his meed of everlasting rest,  
And since untimely advent of decay  
Hath marred the issue of the unborn years  
Pregnant with good e'en from gestation brief?  
Let it be that no single nation's grief,  
No isolated plenitude of tears  
Mourns o'er the bier of England's patriot king,  
But with a universal sorrowing  
The world-wide peoples voice their separate woe.  
Yea, tho' the sundering floods between them flow,  
To-day their loud lament in unison  
Proclaims them linked inviolably one !

In this sad hour of dirge and funeral song,  
And trouble of muffled bells, shall we not yet,  
Tho' every eye be wet,  
Give thanks for him who leaves his empire strong,  
Four-square to every wandering wind that blows,  
Girt round with friends where once a league of  
foes  
With envious menace turned a hostile glance  
Toward his Britain's proud inheritance?  
Shall we not, ere the final rites be said,  
Ere the last solemn tribute we proclaim,

## 62 Edward the Peace-Maker

Give thanks to God and praise His holy Name  
For wisdom passing that which e'er was shed  
Upon a monarch's head,  
Which He with regal largesse dowered on him  
Whose silent corse now rests in utter peace?  
O what tho' unto him there comes release,  
And manumission from the bounds of care?  
He is departed, and our eyes grow dim,  
No more our burden shall his shoulder bear.  
When we were weak he spake to us of might,  
When we grew weary he made plain our way,  
He lighted us a path athwart the night,  
Till shadows melted headlong into flight  
Before the coming splendour of the day.  
Surely his rest is won; for him 't is well,  
But we that have been wont to list his word  
Know with the tolling of his funeral knell  
Never again his counsel shall be heard.  
Hush, while the wailing music rises slow,  
And soft the solemn dying dirges sing;  
O Death, here is the burden of thy woe,  
And here, O Grave, thy sting!

## The Line of Least Resistance

### I

O FALLEN country! Is this Cromwell's land  
That doth permit such babblers thus to hold  
So lightly all that England won of old?  
Is it for this thy mightiness of hand  
Hath built an empire whose high pillars stand  
In every clime round which the seas have rolled  
Their ceaseless courses and their tides of gold?  
Was such speech on their lips who gladly manned  
The ships of Drake that sailed into the west?  
Was it such thought as this that fired the breast  
Of Richard Grenville, when with dauntless mien  
He, with his one small ship defied the might  
Of fifty galleons for a day and night,  
To serve his England, and his England's queen?

### II

Shall we that are not wont to bow our head  
To tyrant's yoke now heed the craven sign  
To follow in a coward's feeble "line  
Of least resistance?" Wherein if we tread  
We do dishonour to our hallowed dead,

Who from Life's beaker poured their sanguine  
wine

Whether on distant shores or where the brine  
Served them as sepulchre and funeral bed.  
England awake ! if thou art not enslaved  
To those, who void of sense of bitter shame,  
Traffic away the honour of thy name,  
Trample upon thy standard that hath waved  
Stainless throughout the tempest of the years :  
Thy Empire was not founded upon fears !

### The Reply

YE have said, " Thy commandments are true,  
In the ways of thy law I delight : "  
Whence then this blood shed as dew,  
And these pyres that gleam through the night ?

Ye have said, " I will dwell in thy house,  
Thy praise will I ever proclaim : "  
Ye have wearied my soul with your vows  
That ye broke in the scorn of my name.

Ye have cried to me loudly, " O Lord,  
Forget not the voice of thy foes : "  
Ye have whetted the edge of your sword,  
And have prayed me to gird you to blows.

Ye have spat in my face : ye have broken  
My laws, and have heard not my voice :  
Ye have held not my words for a token,  
Ye have said, " We shall always rejoice."

Ye have boasted, " O Lord, I am holy,  
Preserve thou my soul : " ye have lied :  
Ye have said, " Lo, thy servant is lowly,"  
While ye swelled in your limitless pride.

They that dwell in my house, ye have said,  
Are blessèd : but ye are accursed :  
Ye have laden my altars with dead,  
And with blood ye have sated your thirst.

Wherefore now I will pluck you asunder  
And rend the gold crown from your brows :  
When I oped not the voice of my thunder  
Ye laughed as ye made me your vows.

But now I will have ye no more,  
An offence in my sight ye have grown :  
A new people shall heark to my law,  
A nation that ye have not known.

They shall smite not though sore they be smitten,  
When reviled they shall turn not again :  
For behold is my judgment not written  
" The meek shall inherit and reign " ?

With love shall they plenish the world,  
They shall wield neither fire nor sword :  
My lightnings again shall be furled,  
And my thunders shall cease, saith the Lord !

## The Future

WHEN the perfume has fled from the rose,  
When the soul of the lily is shaken,  
When the garden is drear and forsaken  
Save by the shrill wind that blows  
Unceasingly plaining its woes :  
When the fort of the Summer is taken  
By a tyrant whose armies awaken  
No sound of the voice of their foes,  
Shall the light of the days that have fled  
Seem aught but a vision of sleep  
Dreamed 'neath a shadow as deep  
As the dusk of the realms of the dead ?  
Shall the beauty that Autumn hath shed  
Find voice when the winter skies weep ?

## Evening Pictures

## I

I WATCHED the hills faint out into the night  
And the long glory of the evening die,  
Flaming along the transepts of the sky  
In wild magnificence of crimson light,  
As tho' the day had fallen in fiercest fight  
And, all disdainful to take wings and fly,  
Had slowly poured its life-blood without sigh  
Or moan, and so passed mutely out of sight.  
Like a pale spectre rising from the tomb  
I watched the moon sail over the hill-crest :  
The fields were hushed and silent, all the west  
Was deepest purple fading into gloom.  
The wreck of battle slept in Night's dark womb  
Whence come the shadowy harbingers of rest.

## II

To-night the sun sank early to his rest  
With no long-clinging splendour in the sky.  
No blazing firmament enchants the eye,  
But o'er the arch of heaven from east to west  
A grey expanse is spread. No eager quest

For gorgeous hues of eve or panoply  
Of purple, as when monarchs silent lie,  
Can find one fiery pinnacle or crest.  
There is a hush, save where the breezes shake  
The poplar leaves : to rest the birds have gone :  
The grey sinks into dusk : the night steals on.  
Slowly athwart the bosom of the lake  
The moon's pale shadow steals, the waters take  
The silent kiss, grown mystical and wan.

## No More

**I**T might have been in those far days of yore,  
But now the world and thou are dead to me :  
All the sweet dreams that came of old can be  
No more, no more.

Ask me not then to think of times gone by ;  
I would forget them : bid me not recall  
The visions that I saw in Love's sweet hall,  
O let them die !

For when I woke and knew the dream was vain  
And my fair Eden but a wilderness,  
E'en then I dared not love a whit the less,  
For very pain.



And slowly stole the dawn upon my soul,  
But with it came the clearness of the day  
Whereby I saw the world that round me lay,  
And saw thy goal !

Whereof the sight burnt hot into my brain,  
But I was dumb and my tears would not flow,  
Even tho' whispering voices sweet and low  
Spake once again.

Yea, called me as the Siren's melody  
In far-off years made music unto death,  
Opening the gates of hell that lay beneath  
The azure sea.

But I refused to hearken to their tongue :  
I sealed my ears lest I should hear and heed ;  
And since—the silent years do not recede,  
Or old grow young !

## The Fallen Rose

*Οὐ ῥόδον αὖον ὀλεῖται*

THEOCRITUS, IDYLL XXVII. 9.

FALLEN and scattered wide, the crimson leaves  
Lie drying in the sun,  
But still about them cleaves  
Perfume to be for token  
That now, its journey o'er, its long day done,  
The rose is fallen and broken.

Yet like to some rare jewel that one breaks,  
And in the sundering  
A greater radiance wakes  
From where its heart is shattered,  
So to the winds these leaves shall perfume fling  
Now they are fallen and scattered.

And in new summers when the roses bloom  
Mindless of this poor one,  
But round its silent tomb  
Rejoice in garments bright,  
I will think on it tho' beside me none  
That recks of past delight.

## To R. S. Hawker

**G**UARDIAN of St. Morwenna's ancient shrine,  
I greet thy spirit, poet of the sea !  
Who sang'st the roar and hiss and revelry  
When ocean lifted up his voice to thine,  
Thundering o'er vast Atlantic's azure line  
With none to hush his messages to thee;  
When hurricanes yelled loud in awful glee,  
And called thee o'er the seething fields of brine.  
Sleep thy long sleep, tho' not by those grey walls  
That knew so well thy step, thy form, thy tone :  
Yet not for thee shall the long sea make moan,  
For thou dost dwell in Fame's eternal halls,  
Stronger than stern Dundagel rising lone,  
Immutable whatever tempest calls.

To Francis Thompson

POET, thou hast passed forth upon thy way,  
 Lit by Faith's fiery cresset through the night  
 On to thy place amid those cohorts bright  
 Whose eyes behold an everlasting day.  
 For thee the cataphracts and armèd hosts  
 And heaven's artillery can hold no fears.  
 Who ever heard resounding in thy ears  
 Angelic lauds that swell through heaven's coasts.  
 Thou wilt seek out thy place as one whose feet  
 Returning home tread paths well known of old,  
 While round thee pæans of welcoming are rolled;  
 Clothed in terrific splendour as is meet,  
 Angels and powers shall waft thee to thy seat,  
 Fashioned, as thy pure song, of virgin gold.

Horace. Odes i. 9

THOU seest how yon Soracte stands  
 White with its deep embrace of snow,  
 Nor can the groaning woods below  
 Sustain the weight. In icy bands  
 Locked, all the rivers cease to flow.

## 72 Horace. Odes 1. 9

Shut out the cold by piling high  
Upon the blazing hearth the wood :  
Bring forth the wine that now hath stood  
While four long years have wandered by,  
In Sabine jars stored, sweet and good.

But to the gods leave all the rest,  
Who, having said that peace shall be  
'Twixt angry winds and roaring sea,  
The cypress shakes no more its crest :  
The agèd ash lists their decree.

Seek not to-morrow's fate unborn,  
And whatso lot thy fortune brings,  
Count it among thy precious things :  
And, being young, in no wise scorn  
Sweet love and dances, while the wings

Of sombre hoariness delay  
To mar thy youthful day's disport :  
Now let the plain, the open court,  
And whispers soft at close of day  
Be at the looked-for hour resought.

Now let the rippling laugh be born,  
Betrayed of the lurking maid  
From some lone corner's secret shade :  
Now from her hands or arms be torn  
Some trinket her pretence forbade.

## The Enchanted Castle

I HAVE a fairy palace where I dwell  
Apart from all the world, apart from strife,  
Where never jarring sound breaks on the air,  
And no day wanes save toward a lovelier night.

There Beauty holds her court, and on her wait  
The glories of the sunset, and the dawn  
Flushing the distant hills, and all the stars  
In prodigal magnificence in heaven.

And round those magic battlements and walls  
The sea for ever washes, and the foam  
Flung high toward many a gleaming minaret  
Wreathes them with crowns of splendid loveliness.

And from the deep there come strange murmurings,  
When Twilight sinks apace, and all is still,  
And whisper ancient songs within my ears  
Like echoes of forgotten melodies.

Here mine eyes gaze, as in a crystal ball,  
On all the wonders all the years have seen :  
They pass in long array before my sight,  
And the dim veil that shrouds the past is drawn.

## 74      The Enchanted Castle

Here have I lured the hoary watchman Time,  
And lulled him fast asleep within my halls,  
And I have hung his scythe above his couch ;  
And without motion stands his hour glass :

Which oftentimes I take within my hand,  
And backward roll its silent sandy course :  
And then strange scenes of glory stand revealed  
And ancient cities raise their heads again.

Gigantic Babylon from out the dust  
Of unremembered centuries appears,  
As when Semiramis the sceptre swayed,  
And fair Nitocris in her gardens joyed.

Carthage and Greece and Persia here I view,  
Stately in slow procession winding on,  
And o'er the land that Cæsar ruled to die,  
Spreads a new light as of a risen sun.

Or else I gaze upon a world in arms,  
And decked for battle sweeps a host along  
In wild, tumultuous ecstasy of strife,  
And War's fierce shouts besiege the clouds with  
    storm.

And then I see the heavens of distant days :  
Dim grows the darkening west, and faint as passed  
Long bygone dawns of immemorial eld,  
And vanished twilights of unnumbered years.

## The Enchanted Castle 75

And as the morn shall blush and evening burn  
And fleet and be no more in future days,  
From out my palace casements I may look,  
And they shall linger and Death speak no word.

Here blooms the rose and here the lilies sway,  
Lulled by soft breezes that speak low of sleep ;  
And here the slumberous poppies bend their heads,  
And as the sinking stars urge on repose.

And when the last faint light of evening dies,  
And 'neath the friendly silence of the moon  
The waves are hushed, I mount my castle walls,  
And commune with the spirits of the air.

And o'er the lofty gateway of my hall,  
And o'er each stairway and on every porch,  
I have engraved in characters of gold :  
“ Let no man speak lest he should break the spell.”

## A Prayer

LET me but smell the roses once again  
And hear the viol wake once more to life :  
Let me but listen to the Summer rain  
At night upon the forest's leafy breast.  
Then will I go well pleased from out the strife,  
Beyond the fiery chambers of the west.

Beyond the porches of the dawn, afar  
To some fair court where Beauty reigns supreme,  
Whence comes the brightness of the evening star,  
And all of loveliest that we now behold :  
More glorious than we can conceive or dream  
Shall be the splendour of that land of gold.

Only I would that somewhat yet were left,  
In any region where my soul may stray,  
Of earthly joy : I would not be bereft  
Of all that I have known and loved so well,  
The perfume of the fields at break of day,  
The solemn tolling of the evening bell.

These things I would remember, if it be  
That aught survive the hushing of the breath,  
If there be land beyond that darkling sea  
Whereon each sail at last must launch away—  
The mystic ocean whereon men say Death  
Holds sombre state and undisputed sway.



## My Garden

HERE in my garden as I stand,  
With hollyhocks on either hand,  
And places where the roses bloom  
That fill the air with soft perfume,  
My soul is filled with sweet delight  
As deep as are the shades of night,  
When yet the silver moon is young  
And with few stars the sky is hung.

The hawthorn bloom has passed away,  
The wall-flower sweet has lived its day,  
The crocus and the hyacinth  
Have died in wreathing summer's plinth.  
But now the grass was strong and green  
Aflame with cowslips in between,  
And daisies and sweet buttercups  
Whereof the bee, contented, sups.

The chestnut with its spiral flower  
Is past the zenith of its power,  
When cones of radiant pink and white  
Deck out the fan-shaped leaves with light.  
The almond and the apple-bloom  
Have passed into the silent tomb,  
And now the rose reigns over all  
As mistress in fair Summer's hall.

## My Garden

I have a hedge of sweet-brier too,  
And beds of marjoram and rue :  
My love-lies-bleeding droops the head,  
Refusing to be comforted.  
And here the sun his radiance darts  
Upon my pansies' purple hearts,  
And finds his image fierce and bold  
Reflected in the marigold.

Blue cornflowers here, and heliotrope  
Deck all the face of yonder slope ;  
Beneath them sleepy poppies grow  
As where soft Lethe's waters flow.  
Above, my grove of linden trees  
Sighs softly in the gentle breeze  
That sings in the great witch-elm, crowned  
With honeysuckle wreathed around.

Of all the treasures could I tell  
That in my peaceful garden dwell,  
I should exhaust the rolling year  
Ere I had shown my poplars sere,  
And while upon the sun-dial's face  
Hour sped on hour, in silent race,  
I should be sunk in reverie  
Till winter claimed his sovereignty.

## Nocturne

**I**N the night when the shadows are deepest  
And dim the white soul of the moon,  
When the place where thou peacefully sleepest  
Is filled with faint breezes that swoon,  
When the perfume of roses is nigh,  
Then in thought to thy chamber I fly.

The night air is gratefully laden  
With gifts to the weary of heart,  
And the kiss of the silver-orbed maiden  
Has power to heal every smart :  
When the light of the day doth offend,  
Then dusk cometh nigh as a friend.

The sunset in golden-hued splendour  
Fails fast in the gathering gloom ;  
All the glory each cloud doth surrender  
To sink in Oblivion's tomb,  
Has passed to its silent repose  
Where dwelleth the soul of the rose.

But there cometh no sleep to my pillow,  
The drowsy-eyed god is away :  
I can hear the soft breeze in the willow  
And the fountains that lazily play.  
And my bosom is empty of cheer  
And solace, for thou art not near.

## To Amaryllis

**I**F I ask and you say nay,  
Curling lips in scorn,  
Night will gather o'er my day  
Tho' it be fair-born ;  
Can a face so fair to see  
Harbinger of shadows be ?

If I ask and you refuse  
With an angry eye,  
I have nought beside to choose  
Save that I may die.  
Can such sparkling wells of light  
Commune have with realms of night ?

If I seek but one embrace  
And you bid me go,  
Never more to see your face,  
Grief will kill me so.  
Can it be that thy sweet breath  
Aught should frame of things of Death ?

## The Better Part

SO I but sing with accent true  
I care not greatly whence the song ;  
My chosen path I must pursue  
E'en to the end tho' it be long.

I nothing reck of time and place,  
For they are man's imaginings ;  
Earth's boundaries cannot give me space  
To test the ardour of my wings.

And tho' like Icarus I fly  
Too near the visage of the sun,  
'Tis better far to soar on high  
Than slumber ere the day be done.

'Tis better far to lead the van,  
Tho' falling in the thickest strife,  
Than to yield up to any man  
Through mere desire of empty life.

## Penelope Forsaken

HERE on this barren coast the sea is loud,  
And all day long the birds of wind and storm  
Plain ceaselessly to the unheeding wave.  
Hitherward comes no sound of splashing oar,  
And to this harbour never any sail.  
The day sinks into night, and night fades out  
Into sad flamings of a joyless dawn,  
As tho' it were a funeral pyre to light  
To silent death the births of happier days.  
Week unto week succeeds and empty months  
Creep into years, and still I dwell alone,  
And know not if Ulysses comes again.  
Long he abode where Ilion's windy towers  
Looked out in silence toward the hoary sea.  
Full many a time he saw the crimson orb  
Incarnadine the breast of Ocean, sunk  
In peace, awaiting the still kiss of night,  
While yet the walls of Priam proudly stood  
Which now ensepulchre the mighty dead.  
But with the crash of ruined battlements  
Still ringing in his ears, and with the sight  
Of wreckage of an empire derelict  
Still in his vision, on the unvintaged sea  
Ulysses launched, and through the angry surge  
Turned towards Ithaca his yearning keels.

Yea, and at length upon the sandy beach  
Forth leaped, tho' many tempests vexed his path,  
Tho' he had wandered long and wearily  
On many journeys strange and perilous,  
Smitten of winds and buffeted of storms :  
And with the dreadful anger of the Gods  
Afflicted, scourged, and well-nigh overcome,  
He yet returned to Ithaca and me.  
Alas ! how few the days together spent,  
Ere his heart hungered for a nameless quest,  
And every sea cried out to him aloud,  
And every wind was as a messenger  
To call him out beyond this narrow isle,  
Towards the fiery chambers of the west  
Where haply the great sun is lulled to sleep.  
Yea, and tho' proof against the Siren's song,  
And dire enchantments of Calypso's isle,  
He hearkened but too willingly to these  
Half-whispered callings unto the unknown,  
Which lay a potent siege against his soul ;  
So that he journeyed on I know not where,  
And left me lone upon this barren isle  
To let my longing heart consume away  
In yearning for a step that never comes,  
To listen for a voice I never hear.  
When morning flushes all the eastern sky,  
I say, "Perchance ere eve he will return."  
At noon when in the heavens the sun is high,  
I murmur, "What if he be resting now  
Till the fierce ardour of the sun be spent?"

## 84 Penelope Forsaken

At eve I see the crimson charioteers  
Drive headlong towards the gateways of the night,  
And sigh, "Before to-morrow's dawn perchance":  
Perchance—twin brother unto Hopelessness—  
Whose name doth comfort many weary souls,  
Unlearned as yet from whence his race doth spring.

What can I do that I have not essayed?  
What task is there that I would not perform,  
So that Ulysses came unto mine arms?  
What vow have I neglected? O! what prayer  
Wherewith I have not wearied heaven's lords?  
Yea, I have poured my soul in travail forth  
Unto the Gods, made supplications meet  
To move a heart of stone to hear my cry.  
Such litanies of anguish I have sobbed  
As might suffice to move the host of heaven,  
And draw a pitying sigh from Zeus himself.  
But still he comes not, and perchance again  
Never shall gaze on windy Ithaca  
Arising a steep citadel from the sea;  
Nor hear the thunderous surge upon the rocks  
Make awful music through the silent night.

If I might know he were a slumberer  
In death's cold arms, I could but bow my head  
In anguish yet assuaged by the one thought  
That haply I shall journey forth anon,  
Across whatever bournes are set to Time,  
Into the vast Beyond, wherein my soul



## Penelope Forsaken 85

And his for whom I yearn may commune have,  
Such as is meet for spirits of the dead.  
But ever haunted by the ghost of Hope  
Whose dwelling is so nigh unto Despair,  
I linger on and catch at every sound  
That may bring tidings of my vanished lord.

O thou loud wind for ever in my ears,  
Haste the slow barque that bears Ulysses home,  
Swell out his sails and speed his tardy keel.  
And thou, Poseidon, ruler of the waves,  
Smooth out a path upon thy watery realm,  
That he may steer towards his homeward isle  
In peace, unbroken with the tempest's breath.  
And ye, celestial fires, be ye a torch,  
A flame of fire to light the dusky night,  
That he may shun the perils of the deep.  
And, O my heart, cease thou thy clamouring  
Incessant that wears out my weary days,  
Or be thou still for ever in the dust!

## Le Guignon

**T**O me thou art alone, and dost not hold  
Thy being in a dissimilitude  
To Fortune's fabled land. Thou hast no feud  
With any another, but thy powers, rolled  
In one tremendous unity of hate,  
Seek only Man's assured discomforting ;  
Well pleased if from his anguished soul they wring  
A curse against his God, his life, his fate.  
Thou art no sad defect from some fair mean  
Of temperate bliss, but unbeset and free  
To prove thyself by birth and right a queen,  
Against us turned thy face shall ever be  
Until each tongue have said, each eye have seen,  
There is no Fortune, there is only thee.

“Non sum qualis eram”

THESE are not all ; there have been other days,  
And other dawns my eyes have looked upon :  
My feet have trodden many divers ways  
In threading Life's impenetrable maze,  
And sometimes, even on me, the sun has shone.

There was a time when I knew other scenes :  
I looked on Life and saw that it was fair,  
Unmindful of the coming Might-have-beens  
When in Youth's palace all the kings and queens  
Lie dead, beyond the hope of any prayer.

Not always came the shadowy armies round  
My nightly couch to fill my soul with dread,  
But lulled by Lethe-water's slumberous sound,  
And with sweet chains of poppies softly bound,  
I knew the quiet of the dreamless dead.

I, having seen the wrecking tide of years  
Mangle its prey upon Life's weary strand,  
Yet face the issue void of any fears,  
And mingle no unprofitable tears  
With the long leagues of unrecording sand.

## 88     “Non sum qualis eram”

And this I do because in other days,  
When from Youth's tower there pealed the Rose's  
    chime,

I dreamed a dream beyond my power to praise,  
And tho' all else beneath the sun decays  
This shall not feel the ravening scourge of Time.

## O Mihi Præteritos

O DAYS that have gone by,  
Fulfilled with mingled glory, grief and pain,  
For ever after you in vain I cry :  
“Come back to me again !”

Faces that were to me  
Bright as the sunshine in a leafy lane,  
To you my vain request must ever be :  
“Come back to me again !”

Voices whose dulcet tones  
Were antidotes against the world's great bane,  
How oft I cry to all-unheeding stones :  
“Come back to me again !”

So in the poet's soul  
When all the Muses from their lutes refrain  
Piteous entreaties to the heavens roll :  
“Come back to me again !”

## Catholicity

WE hold no single narrow scheme of things  
To be the best beneath the rolling sun,  
Knowing that till the great World-Curfew rings  
The dreams are many but the purpose one.

We that have gleaned in divers fields afar  
Add to our knowledge this, when all is done,  
That, while there roll the wheels of Time's slow  
car,  
The dreams are many but the purpose one.

And when these transient hours have passed away,  
And to their final rest all men have won,  
Perchance there will be heard a Voice to say  
The dreams were many but the purpose one.

## The Three Silences

## I

THERE are three silences. The one of hills  
That with Titanic arms reach heavenward  
As tho' in agony of beseeching prayer.  
The sun falls on them, but they speak no word ;  
The rain and mist wreathe round them, but their lips  
Are never parted, and far o'er their crests  
The moon sits in her lofty silver tower  
While they are speechless, still, immutable,  
In awful grandeur that no question asks  
Nor answers : and the night in solemn pomp  
Where late the wounded sun lay pouring forth  
His life-blood, holds her court with sheen of stars  
Like arrowy tongues of light, but of the hills  
Unmarked. Yet most the silence when at noon  
Deep solitude holds vale and hill alike,  
Save that the voice of silvery falling brooks  
In leafy valley shades comes far and faint :  
Yet while their course is still upon the hills,  
Welling from out some secret still recess,  
They glide unnoticed, for they make no sign,  
Nor any word speak whence they come or go.  
Yet, O ye mountain silences, not all  
Voiceless and speechless are ye unto me,

## 92      The Three Silences

Who, wand'ring as one fleeing busy throngs  
And noisy marts, some secret commune take  
With Nature's everlasting witnesses :  
There gain an absolution from the world,  
And all its tainted strife and lust for power  
Consign to realms oblivious of the sun ;  
There stand in fearless nakedness of life,  
Uncumbered with the petty pomps and cares  
That seek to hinder the true dignity  
That at the moment of our birth is ours,  
Yet from that time decreases day by day,  
As o'er us gather the unheeded years,  
Till one swift stroke, dividing Life and Death,  
Unclothes us as we were, strips from us all  
The meaningless accumulated gawds  
That, like the ivy-tendrils round the oak,  
Sap our best strength and mar our energy.

### II

One silence is there also of the woods,  
Filled with fantastic shadows, as of gods  
Whose lofty heads yet mingle with the stars  
While deigning to seek dwelling on the earth.  
Dawn is not here, nor sunset, nor the night  
Of darkness lit by many-twinkling stars :—  
Only perpetual twilight of green leaves,  
Or foliage hued as heaven when the sun  
Stricken to death goes bleeding to the West.  
And in this twilight, when the winds are still,



Sated of song the birds, or far afield,  
I find the inmost heart of solitude.  
All sounds are hushed as in some ancient town  
Sacked in the dawn of Time, whereof the wall  
Stands desolate, the gates all tenantless ;  
Derelict empires, shattered citadels,  
And battle-wreckage of an elder world :—  
Such as is now the might of Nineveh,  
Or Babylon where old Euphrates rolls,  
Or windy Ilion whose high battlements  
Flamed forth in anguish thro' the dusky night.  
The very foxglove spires seem to be  
The turrets of deserted shrines ; the ferns  
The fans of queens that lured forgotten worlds :  
The branches that the winter's tempests strew  
Like giant limbs rent pitilessly, seem  
Swords of long-vanished warriors, spears and helms  
Of hosts engulfed in drear Oblivion !  
And as from those far days there comes no voice,  
So in these woodland solitudes deep peace  
Is everywhere, so that to speak aloud  
Were sacrilege. The very air seems full  
Of unseen presences, divine yet dumb,  
Save of that inward voice, more potent far  
Than any word, that speaks unto the soul  
Of splendid visions that are yet reserved  
For beauty's humblest servants, fairer forms,  
And faces even lovelier than hers  
Who woke the heroes of old time to strife  
Whereof the world shall ring unto the end.

## III

And the last silence dwells within the soul  
When all life's lutany hath ceased to sound,  
And every viol-string is hushed in sleep ;  
When bitter things are known for what they are,  
And sweet for sweet. Then only is the mind,  
The living soul the master of itself :  
In secret chambers housed where never wind  
Makes any sound, nor the slow tread of years  
Troubles with echo of deciduous feet  
Its golden courts, so that it well might seem  
Sleep's province or the land of dead desires,  
Death therein holding usufruct in full.  
Yet tho' within these shadowy chambers vast  
No sound of Life is heard : tho' on the ear  
There breaks not any tumult of applause,  
So that they might be deemed dark charnel-caves,  
Or mouldered ossuaries giving sepulture  
To spoils Death tears from out the wreck of Life ;  
Yet far beneath there burn eternal fires  
In sacred silence, that no force can quench,  
In elemental strength unbound and free,  
That sustenance afford and nutriment  
For those sweet voices (when the spell is loosed,  
The sanctity of silence violate)  
Which break like thunder of a thousand harps  
In music more than mortal : not at strife  
With stillness, but its final complement

And full design ; no troubling of the air  
With dissonance, but such a tide of song  
As sweeps the chords of Time, till in itself  
It seems a very silence, since its end  
Leaves widowed those who with the rapture held  
Grew drunken with its untumultuous sound.  
And these great violations of the reign  
Of silence, elder than all things beside,  
Are of the poet's making, these the voice  
Of Princes of the ancient House of Song  
Who thus may dare, all unrebuked, to strike  
Their viols and their harpstrings, till the world  
Go nightward with the hosts of stricken stars !

## Carpe Diem

**B**UT yester-eve I had a rose  
New broken from its silken sheath :  
To-day its scattered beauty strows  
With glory the dull earth beneath.  
For setting out to weave a wreath  
To deck my lady's head withal,  
I found that on the wind's rude breath  
Had entered in the tyrant Death,  
And made my hapless rose a thrall.

I told my lady this was so,  
Whereat she smiled and bade me think  
How fast the clock of Time doth go,  
Ere mortals gather at the brink  
Of Lethe, that sweet stream to drink  
That blots the tale of years away.  
“That hour has bootless passed,” she said,  
“And I've no garland for my head,  
And you have lost a kiss to-day.”

# The Dream and the Deed 97

## The Dream and the Deed

ALL night I fled past golden shores,  
With incense breath to swell my sails;  
I saw fair hills and sylvan vales  
Resplendent with ungathered ores.

Then fell the sacred balm of sleep,  
I slumbered tho' I seemed to wake,  
While no sound stirred at all to break  
The magic silence of the deep.

And in my sleep I fell to pray  
The rosy morn to stay her feet;  
My trance was so exceeding sweet,  
I feared 't would pass with dawn of day.

I said: "There is no fairer sight  
Than the great vision I have seen,  
Henceforth for ever be my queen,  
O mystic lady of the night."

But she made answer, "Tho' it seem  
So sweet a bliss, yet let it be,  
And learn one golden rune from me:  
The deed is greater than the dream."

## 98 The Days that Follow After

### The Days that Follow After

*‘Αμέραι δ’ ἐπίλοιποι  
Μάρτυρες σοφώτατοι.*

PINDAR, Oly. I. 33, 34.

I GAVE them of my best : they flung  
In scorn the gift away :  
They took no count that I had sung  
When shadows gloom'd my day.  
Only they said :  
“His speech is of the dead  
Of things grown old and grey.

“So let him be as are those things  
Whereof he makes his song,  
And lie in dust with ancient kings  
Whose word for right or wrong  
No man doth know,  
Since Time's unturning flow  
Bears down both weak and strong.”

So let them say, but I abide  
Unfearing till the end :  
Humble because fulfilled with pride  
For what the years shall mend.  
I am in heart  
Far above any smart  
Upheld, that Time may send.

## Immortality

I MAY not sing the songs that I would say,  
Because the night is near at hand, and I  
Watching the pale decrepitude of day  
Pass voiceless to the occident where lie  
Lands all unknown, that never mortal eye  
Hath sighted, fail of speech, and miss the way,  
To me the landscape glooms in shadows grey,  
Because I know that all things need must die.  
But yet within my tenement of clay  
Frail tho' it be, and meet for swift decay,  
Comes there at times a rumour of a sun  
For which Man's voice hath never ceased to pray,  
Arisen in magnificent array,  
That hath no setting when the day is done.

## Te Deum Laudamus

THO' all my way as yet  
Has been in places rugged to the tread ;  
Tho' every step in it has been beset  
With stones wherefrom my wounded feet have bled :

Tho' all my lonely road  
Has been uphill throughout the weary day,  
I yet rejoice that I have borne my load  
With no upholding hand to be my stay.

Tho' every painful yard  
Unaided, I have carved my slow advance,  
I now give thanks my task has been so hard,  
And that I have not bowed the knee to Chance.

Tho' I have scarcely heard  
One voice of comfort all the long day through,  
I yet am glad there came no cheering word  
To nerve me in the thing I had to do.

But of all things soe'er  
For which I raise my song of praise on high,  
The chief is that, 'neath all I had to bear,  
I uttered neither moan nor any cry.



## Some Press Opinions of "Cassandra and Other Poems"

"Mr. Drew . . . produces meritorious, well-handled poems."—*The Times*.

"Mr. Drew is a scholar . . . and a man of fine susceptibilities. The verse is really clever."—*Daily News*.

"That Mr. Drew has a genuine instinct for beauty of form cannot be denied, and there are occasional lines which recall the manner of the great poets. 'Cassandra' itself, for example, is full of striking imagery, and the opening passage—it is unfortunately too long to quote—is one of haunting beauty. Mr. Drew's work . . . shows at times a welcome freshness of outlook, and in some cases—notably 'Orpheus and Eurydice' and the 'Village Bell'—a careful attention to poetic form."

*The Tribune.*

"For a young poet Mr. Drew reveals a wonderful outlook, and he can be reflective as well as imaginative. He shows, too, a resource in the way of expression, and a certain healthy disregard for mere technical perfection. In short, he is one of whom something may be expected. He really impresses the sensitive reader."

*Dundee Advertiser.*

"There is much felicitous verse in this little volume. . . . The well-worn classical subjects are treated with suitable dignity: indeed, Mr. Drew has written nothing in this volume to which exception can be taken."

*Publisher and Bookseller.*

"Mr. Drew's 'Cassandra' is ambitious work."

*Spectator.*

"Lovers of poetry of the more studious and pensive sort will find it well repay perusal."—*Scotsman*.

"There is much dignity and passion in the lament for Troy, which gives the volume its title. . . . Mr. Drew seems to be most happily inspired by classic themes, and 'Orpheus and Eurydice' is not only his longest, but in many respects his best poem. There is nothing finer in the book than this haunting description of the music of the hero's lyre :—

"The thrilling strains swept on unceasingly,  
Swelling now high, now low, and pealing round  
In eddying circles of majestic sound.'

There is something of the real magic in this."

*Free Lance.*

## Some Press Opinions of "Prometheus Delivered"

"'Prometheus' is a poetical drama—the work of a scholar who writes in verse of a serious, somewhat ceremonious dignity; which marks also the other pieces—a sonnet sequence 'To Virgil' and a short poem 'To Homer.'"—*The Times.*

"The blank verse of the principal speakers is admirably managed and the choruses are distinctly good. . . . Mr. Drew has given us a dignified and interesting rendering of one of the world's greatest legends. . . . A volume of sincere and serious verse."—*Daily Telegraph.*

"Mr. Drew's meritorious 'Prometheus Delivered' does not send one impatiently to Æschylus, Goethe, or Shelley, and that is much. He can use blank verse, is never far off poetry, and often in the midst of it, and, even more important, has considerable power of form. . . . Mr. Drew has written a highly interesting poem—almost a noble poem. The ending of it where Prometheus welcomes the sleep that has so long been denied him reaches a high level of beauty. Throughout the verse is strong, dignified and well-worded."—*The Nation.*

“The verses have a lofty feeling and a calm, finely wrought expression which makes them not unworthy of matter so ambitious. The principal piece in the volume aims high. It is a lyrical drama on the ancient Greek model on a theme already treated in a famous masterpiece of English poetry. Mr. Drew’s work, however, eludes comparison with Shelley’s by its strict adherence to the classical exemplars and by a peculiar fidelity, not untempered by an allowable poetic licence in its attempt to reconstruct one of the lost parts of the trilogy of Æschylus. A work of statuesque severity, it has a fine beauty and elevation of imagination which will readily evoke the interest and admiration of modern lovers of poetry.”—*The Scotsman*.

“Amid much that is dull and trivial in modern poetry, it is delightful to meet with the directness and freshness, the strength and beauty of Mr. Drew’s work. . . . The figure of the brave Prometheus is nobly portrayed, and his deliverance is sung in stately verse of fine quality. There are several exquisite lyrical outbursts, as the chorus on page 35. . . . Mr. Drew keeps at . . . a high level.”

*Aberdeen Journal*.

“Mr. Bernard Drew is daring indeed. He gives us ‘Prometheus Delivered’ and places himself in direct rivalry with Shelley. But there is something to be said for Mr. Drew’s plan. He is not a slave to the conventional ideas of Greek dramatic laws. In his own way he handles the chorus, in his own way he reveals to us the manner of the release by Hercules. But in his diction Mr. Drew is admirably direct. He avoids the purple patch, and in temperament throughout he is sympathetically Greek. That in itself is no small merit: it is worlds apart from much that has passed for ‘Englised’ Greek Drama.”—*Liverpool Daily Post and Mercury*.

“The verse goes with a fine swing; and the idea underlying it of Destiny being more powerful than Jove, and the deliverance by Hercules typifying the triumph of Liberty over Tyranny is distinctly good.”

*Sheffield Daily Telegraph*.

"The author has struck out an original line, and classical scholars will therefore read his play with considerable attention. They will also find it of much merit as poetry, for the author's verse is dignified and resourceful, and he has a pleasing command of striking imagery."

*Nottingham Guardian.*

"Mr. Drew has given us good passages of neat blank verse, full of evidence of that scholarship which distinguished his 'Cassandra.'—*Westminster Gazette.*

"Mr. Drew has a high conception of blank verse, and has spent much thought on his presentation of 'Prometheus.'"—*Glasgow Herald.*

"Mr. Drew has succeeded in writing an interesting poem, graced by much effective imagery."

*Glasgow Evening Times.*

## Some Press Opinions of "The Passing of the Master-Singer"

"An ode of fine quality."—*The Times.*

"An impassioned tribute that will appeal to Swinburne's admirers."—*Dundee Advertiser.*

"Shows its author to be possessed of a fine sense of rhythm and resonance, indicated by the skilful introduction of shorter lines and variations in the rhyming scheme, and of an agreeable fancy. He sings his dirge in quiet, impressive tones."—*Scotsman.*

"It breathes the deepest reverence and love."

*Aberdeen Journal.*



50570

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



**A** 000 685 723 9

